

Speech, Language, and Communication Checklist for Kindy Students
For Teacher use – Identifying students for Speech Pathology Screening

Student name: _____ DOB: _____ Age: _____
School: _____ Date of assessment: _____

Instructions: This checklist helps teachers identify children who may need a speech pathology screening. Tick the skills each child demonstrates consistently. If a child displays multiple 'red flags,' consider referring them for a screening.

Expected Skills for Kindy Students

(These skills should be present in most 4–5-year-olds)

Speech Sounds

Skill	Demonstrated by child (Tick yes/no)
Can be understood by familiar adults most of the time	
Can produce most early developing sounds (p, b, m, t, d, n, k, g, f) correctly	
May still have difficulty with some sounds (e.g., r, th, sh, ch) but is developing	
Uses a mix of long and short sentences with clear speech	
Produces words with correct syllable structure (e.g., does not consistently delete syllables: "elephant" instead of "ephant")	
Demonstrates increasing awareness of sound patterns (e.g., identifying words that start with the same sound)	

Speech Red Flags – Consider referral for Speech Pathology Screening if:

- ✗ Speech is difficult to understand, even for familiar adults
- ✗ Frequently leaves out sounds or replaces sounds in words (e.g., "tat" for "cat")
- ✗ Student uses limited or unclear speech sounds, making communication challenging

Language (Understanding & Using Words)

Skill	Demonstrated by child (Tick yes/no)
Follows 2–3 step instructions (e.g., "Get your hat and put it on the table")	
Understands and answers simple 'wh-' questions (who, what, where)	
Uses sentences with 4–6 words (e.g., "I want the red truck")	
Can retell a simple event or story with key details	
Uses basic grammar correctly (e.g., "He is running" instead of "He run")	
Can describe objects using simple attributes (e.g., big, small, red, round)	
Expands on conversation topics instead of repeating the same phrases	

Language Red Flags – Consider referral for Speech Pathology Screening if:

- ✗ Student Struggles to follow simple instructions or routines
- ✗ Student has limited vocabulary or difficulty forming sentences
- ✗ Student struggles to answer basic questions (who, what, where)
- ✗ Student cannot retell a simple event or story

Social Communication & Play

Skill	Demonstrated by child (Tick yes/no)
Takes turns in conversation	
Makes eye contact when talking	
Uses gestures, facial expressions, and words to communicate	
Can play cooperatively with peers for short periods	
Shows an interest in talking and interacting with others	
Can initiate and maintain simple conversations with familiar peers	
Demonstrates pretend play (e.g., feeding a doll, using objects symbolically)	
Adjusts language when speaking to different people (e.g., using simpler words when talking to a younger child)	

Social communication & Play Red Flags – Consider referral for Speech Pathology Screening if:

- ✗ Has difficulty interacting with peers (e.g., little eye contact, limited turn-taking)
- ✗ Struggles to engage in pretend play or reciprocal conversation
- ✗ Shows frustration when trying to communicate
- ✗ Does not respond to their name consistently
- ✗ Frequently echoes words or phrases without meaningfully engaging in conversation
- ✗ Has difficulty transitioning between activities due to communication struggles

Early Literacy & Pre-Literacy Skills

Skill	Demonstrated by child (Tick yes/no)
Recognises and names some letters and sounds	
Enjoys books and can talk about pictures in a story	
Can hear and identify rhyming words (e.g., "cat" and "hat")	
Can clap out syllables in words (e.g., "ba-na-na")	
Can recognise their name in print	
Can identify at least some letters in their own name	
Shows interest in writing and attempts to draw or copy letters	
Demonstrates phonological awareness skills (e.g., recognizing first sounds in words, can blend and segment simple words like 'cat' & 'dog')	

Early and Pre-literacy Red Flags – Consider referral for Speech Pathology Screening if:

- ✗ Student does not show interest in books, letters, or sounds
- ✗ Student has difficulty recognising own name in print
- ✗ Student has difficulty hearing rhymes or clapping syllables in words
- ✗ Student does not know many letter names and the sounds they represent

Next Steps for Teachers

- If a child shows multiple red flags, discuss your concerns with their parents and consider referring for a speech pathology screening.
- If unsure, consult with the school's learning support team or a speech pathologist from Down South Therapy.
- Use this checklist to monitor progress over time.
- Provide extra language stimulation activities and observe if the child makes progress.
- If needed, implement classroom strategies such as visual supports, simplified instructions, or additional wait time for responses.

This checklist is designed as a guideline and does not replace formal assessment by a speech pathologist. Early identification of speech and language difficulties can help children receive support to thrive in their communication and learning.

For further information or to arrange a screening, contact info@downsouththerapy.com.au